

09/993,314 filed 11/05/2001

Reply to Office Action of December 19, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-12 and 14-33 are pending in the application, and all of these claims stand rejected. With this paper, claim 1 has been amended.

I. Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp et al. WO 98/45481 in view of Yon-Hin et al. US 6,440,645 and further in view of Tanaka et al. Japanese Patent No. 50000093

Claims 1-6, 8-12, 14, and 19-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp et al. WO 98/45481 ("Knapp") in view of Yon-Hin et al. US 6,440,645 ("Yon-Hin") and further in view of Tanaka et al. Japanese Patent No. 50000093 ("Tanaka"). To warrant rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. See MPEP § 2142.

Neither Knapp nor Yon-Hin teaches the claim limitation of a polyacrylamide material or a dimethylacrylamide material modified by one or more additives having the chemical formulas shown at (I), (II), and (III) in previously amended claim 1. The Examiner has indicated on page 3 of the Office action that Tanaka teaches acrylonitrile modified by the chemical of formula II. In response, Applicants have eliminated this alternative from claim 1, leaving only formulas I and III, the latter being renumbered as II in currently amended claim 1. The Examiner does not allege that the combination of Knapp, Yon-Hin, and Tanaka teaches either of these ion-exchangeable polymers, nor do they. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of independent claim 1 as being unpatentable over Knapp in view of Yon-Hin and further in view of Tanaka is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-6, 8-12, 14, and 19-33 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1. Any claim depending from a nonobvious claim is also nonobvious. See MPEP § 2143.03 and *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988). Therefore, dependent claims 2-6, 8-12, 14, and 19-33 are nonobvious. Withdrawal of the rejection of these dependent claims as being unpatentable over Knapp in view of Yon-Hin and further in view of Tanaka is also respectfully requested.

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II. Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp et al. WO 98/45481 in view of Yon-Hin et al. US 6,440,645 and Tanaka et al. Japanese Patent No. 50000093 and further in view of Pourahmadi et al. US 6,440,725

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp in view of Yon-Hin and Tanaka, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Pourahmadi et al. US 6,440,725 ("Pourahmadi"). Claim 7 depends directly from amended claim 1, which has been demonstrated above to be nonobvious. As any claim depending from a nonobvious claim is also nonobvious, claim 7 is, therefore, nonobvious. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claim 7 as being unpatentable over Knapp in view of Yon-Hin and Tanaka, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Pourahmadi is respectfully requested.

III. Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp et al. WO 98/45481 in view of Yon-Hin et al. US 6,440,645 and further in view of Norman et al. US 6,329,357

Claims 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp in view of Yon-Hin, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Norman et al. US 6,329,357 ("Norman"). Claims 15 and 16 depend directly and indirectly, respectively, from amended claim 1, which has been demonstrated above to be nonobvious. As any claim depending from a nonobvious claim is also nonobvious, claims 15 and 16 are, therefore, nonobvious. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 15 and 16 as being unpatentable over Knapp in view of Yon-Hin, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Norman, is respectfully requested.

IV. Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp et al. WO 98/45481 in view of Yon-Hin et al. US 6,440,645 and Tanaka et al. Japanese Patent No. 50000093 and further in view of Beers et al. US 5,508,273

Claims 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp in view of Yon-Hin and Tanaka, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Beers et al. US 5,508,273 ("Beers"). Claims 17 and 18 depend directly and indirectly, respectively, from amended claim 1, which has been demonstrated above to be nonobvious. As any claim depending from a nonobvious claim is also nonobvious, claims 17 and 18 are, therefore,

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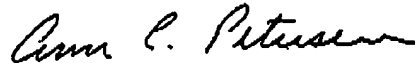
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nonobvious. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 17 and 18 as being unpatentable over Knapp in view of Yon-Hin and Tanaka, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Beers is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe all the pending claims are in condition for allowance and should be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would in any way expedite the prosecution of the application, please do not hesitate to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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Signed: _____

